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Acting Chief, Economic Research Area, ORR

7 December 1959

Chief, Industrial Division, ORR

Topics for Future Discussion or Consideration by the
National Security Council

REF. : Memo from Special Assistant to the President, dated
3 December 1959

1. The current and projected program for National Intelligence Estimates will probably supply the basis for problems deserving NSC considerations. To date some of the problems raised in these estimates may not have been given the systematic considerations they deserve - at least, these considerations have not been discernible in policy statements nor effective administrative action.

2. Three of vital problems concerning our position vis-a-vis the Soviet Bloc deserve systematic study, then policy decisions and administrative implementation; they are:

a. The rapid economic growth of the USSR: What are the plans, policy statements and administrative actions which the US should make to foster higher rates of economic growth?

b. The rapid increase in Soviet allocations to research and development - primarily military - even at the expense of conventional weapon procurement: What objectives, scale of action and administrative organization should we develop to insure the US against highly significant Soviet breakthrough which could put the USSR in a commanding position in the world?

c. A comprehensive US policy on disarmament: On the basis of a systematic study of the residual military needs, economic consequences and political objectives of a US policy on the subject, what is the proper US policy for disarmament and means for attaining assured compliance from all nations? What are the economic consequences of such a policy on the US, the free world, and the Soviet Bloc? Will disarmament by the great powers simply raise the relative military stature of the lesser powers?

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3. These problems have certainly been considered in the past, but it appears that they have not been given systematic study and sufficient time to formulate comprehensive policies nor has decisive administrative actions based on an understanding of all the consequences been taken.

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